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INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2992
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1255
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1224
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2187
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3964
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4878
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2454
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 3029
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 2938
RUEHBA/AMCONSUL PERTH 1102
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 001678

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, DRL, DRL/AWH, NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/05/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: MUNIR CASE -- COURT PROCEEDINGS AGAINST FORMER SPY
CHIEF BEGIN

REF: A. A. JAKARTA 1252

[B. B. JAKARTA 1207](#)

[C. C. JAKARTA 279](#)

[D. D. JAKARTA 112](#)

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Classified By: Dep. Pol/C Stanley Harsha, reasons 1.4 (b+d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: On September 2 and 4, court proceedings began for retired general and former Deputy of the Indonesian National Intelligence Agency (BIN) Muchdi Purwopranjono. He pleaded not guilty for the murder of human rights activist Munir Said Thalib. At the hearing, prosecutors maintained that Muchdi ordered Munir's murder out of revenge for Munir's public assertions linking Muchdi to the 1997/98 disappearances of student activists, and Muchdi's subsequent demotion. Defense lawyers questioned the validity of a key witness for the prosecution. Muchdi is the first official accused in the murder and his trial could implicate other former high level officials. END SUMMARY.

OPENING REMARKS

[1](#)2. (SBU) On September 2 in South Jakarta District Court, lawyers for retired general and former BIN Deputy Muchdi Purwopranjono denied all charges related to the 2004 murder of Munir and requested the court to release Muchdi. They argued international pressure from U.S. Congress and the European Parliament sensationalized the case and interfered with the Indonesian judicial system.

[1](#)3. (C) Defense lawyers requested prosecutors to allow BIN agent, Budi Santoso, to testify in the case. According to media reports, defense lawyers accused Budi of being responsible for Munir's murder. Although Budi did not testify, he had previously provided written evidence which resulted in an earlier conviction of airlines pilot Pollycarpus for Munir's murder (ref D). Budi's affidavit linked Muchdi with Pollycarpus. For example, Budi testified that Muchdi ordered Santoso to make payments to Pollycarpus in 2004, prior to Munir's murder. Defense lawyers contended there would not be an opportunity to refute the written evidence and cross examine Santoso, media reported. The

Attorney General's Office will not subpoena Santoso to testify in the Muchdi trial. (Note: Santoso is currently working for the Indonesian embassy in Pakistan). On September 4, a human rights lawyer closely watching the Muchdi trial, Usman Hamid, told Poloff that Santoso's testimony could implicate other high level BIN officials in the Munir murder investigation.

¶4. (SBU) Prosecutors claimed Muchdi's motive was revenge against Munir. They alleged that Munir's reporting of Army's Special Forces' (Kopassus) alleged involvement in the abduction and disappearance of 13 student activists in 1997 and 1998 resulted in Muchdi's removal as chief of Kopassus. Defense attorneys countered Muchdi was replaced only because of a change in administration from President Suharto to Habibie. At the time of the disappearances Muchdi was not Kopassus chief but rather military commander in Kalimantan, and thus had no connection to the missing activists and no motive to order Munir's murder, defense attorneys maintained.

TRIAL CONTINUES

¶5. (C) On September 4, prosecutors defended the charges against Muchdi and requested the court continue the proceedings without responding to statements by Muchdi's attorneys. Muchdi's motion to dismiss the case was rejected on September 5. As the trial resumes, Indonesian civil society continues to watch the Indonesian government's commitment to see the investigation through to its ultimate conclusion. Hamid hopes that Muchdi's trial could lead to investigations against former high level GOI officials implicated in the murder.

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